Books to Explore Race with Young Kids

Alexander, Kwame. The Undefeated. (JUV 811.6 ALEXA)

The Newbery Award-winning author of The Crossover pens an ode to black American triumph and tribulation, with art from a two-time Caldecott Honoree.

Alko, Selina. The case for loving: the fight for interracial marriage. (JUV 306.846 ALKO)

The story of interracial couple Mildred and Richard Loving, who got married in Washington, D.C., and were arrested after they returned to Virginia, and took their legal case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Barnes, Derrick. Crown: an Ode to the Fresh Cut. (PB BARNE)

Celebrates the magnificent feeling that comes from walking out of a barber shop with newly-cut hair.

Byers, Grace. **I Am Enough.** (**PB** BYERS)

Shares a story of loving who you are, respecting others and being kind to one another.

Celano, Melanie. Something Happened in Our Town: a child's story of racial injustice. (PB CELAN)

After discussing the police shooting of a local Black man with their families, Emma and Josh know how to treat a new student who looks and speaks differently than his classmates. Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers that provides general guidance about addressing racism with children, child-friendly vocabulary definitions, conversation guides, and a link to additional online resources for parents and teachers.

Cherry, Matthew A. **Hair Love.** (**PB** CHERR)

A little girl's daddy steps in to help her arrange her curly, coiling, wild hair into styles that allow her to be her natural, beautiful self.

Clark-Robinson, Monica. Let the Children March. (PB CLARK)

1963, Birmingham, Alabama. After hearing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak, thousands of African American children volunteered to march for their civil rights. They protested the laws that kept black people separate from white people. Simple text and emotive illustrations bring to life this historic event, when-- facing fear, hate, and danger-- these children used their voices to change the world.

Copeland, Misty. **Firebird.** (**PB** COPEL)

American Ballet Theater soloist Misty Copeland encourages a young ballet student, with brown skin like her own, by telling her that she, too, had to learn basic steps and how to be graceful when she was starting out, and that some day, with practice and dedication, the little girl will become a firebird, too. Includes author's note about dancers who led her to find her voice.

Cristina, Henriqueta. Three balls of wool (can change the world. (PB CRIST)

Exiled from their homeland, a young girl and her entire family are unhappy about the monochrome sweaters all children wear until Mom decides to make a change. Includes facts about Portugal's history and government, about Amnesty International, and the text of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Curry, Parker. Parker Looks up: an extraordinary moment. (PB CURRY)

This book is based on the viral photograph of African American toddler Parker Curry, who, during a visit to the National Portrait Gallery, became mesmerized by Amy Sherald's portrait of Michelle Obama, who she thought was a queen.

Dupuis, Jenny Kay. <u>I am Not a Number.</u> (JUV DUPUI)

A picture book based on a true story about a young First Nations girl who was sent to a residential school. When eight-year-old Irene is removed from her First Nations family to live in a residential school she is confused, frightened, and terribly homesick. She tries to remember who she is and where she came from despite the efforts of the nuns to force her to do otherwise. Based on the life of Jenny Kay Dupuis' own grandmother, I Am Not a Number brings a terrible part of Canada's history to light in a way that children can learn from and relate to.

Franklin, Ashley. **Not Quite Snow White**. (PB FRANK)

Tameika is excited to audition for the school's Snow White musical, but when she overhears her classmates say she is too tall, chubby, and brown to play Snow White, she questions whether she is right for the part.

Giovanni, Nikki. Rosa. (JUV 323.092 PARKS)

The story of Rosa Parks and her courageous act of defiance. Provides the story of the young black woman who refused to give up her seat to a white passenger in Alabama, setting in motion all the events of the Civil Rights Movements that resulted in the end of the segregated south, gave equality to blacks throughout the nation, and forever changed the country in which we all live today.

Hong, Jess. **Lovely.** (**PB** HESS)

Big, small, curly, straight, loud, quiet, smooth, wrinkly. Lovely explores a world of differences that all add up to the same thing: we are all lovely!

Hood, Susan. Shake Things Up: 14 women who changed the world. (JUV 305.4 HOOD)

This stellar ensemble of picture book illustrators have come together to create an inspiring and empowering introduction to some of history's most galvanizing young women.

hooks, bell. **Skin Again.** (**PB** HOOKS)

The skin I'm in is just a covering. It cannot tell my story. The skin I'm in is just a covering. If you want to know who I am, you have got to come inside and open your heart way wide. Celebrating all that makes us unique and different, [this book] offers new ways to talk about race and identity.

Johnson, Chelsea. <u>Intersectional Allies: we make room for all.</u> (PB INTER)

A handy book about intersectionality that depicts the nuances of identity and embraces difference as a source of community.

Katz, Karen. The Colors of Us. (PB KATZ)

Seven-year-old Lena and her mother observe the variations in the color of their friends' skin, viewed in terms of foods and things found in nature.

Lester, Julius. Let's Talk About Race. (JUV 305.8 LESTE)

The author introduces the concept of race as only one component in an individual's or nation's "story."

Lindstrom, Carol. We are Water Protectors. (PB LINDS)

Water is the first medicine. It affects and connects us all... When a black snake threatens to destroy the Earth and poison her people's water, one young water protector takes a stand to defend Earth's most sacred resource. Inspired by the many indigenous-led movements across North America, this bold and lyrical picture book issues an urgent rallying cry to safeguard the Earth's water from harm and corruption.

Lyons, Kelly Starling. Sing a song: how "Lift Every Voice and Sing" inspired generations. (PB STARL)

Illustrations and easy-to-read text follow a family through five generations as each is inspired by the song written in 1900 to honor Abraham Lincoln. Includes author's note on the history of the song and its meaning in her family.

Manushkin, Fran. <u>Happy in our Skin</u>. (**PB** MANUS)

Bouquets of babies sweet to hold: cocoa-brown, cinnamon, and honey gold. Ginger-coloured babies, peaches and cream, too - splendid skin for me, splendid skin for you! A delightfully rhythmical read-aloud text is paired with bright, bustling art from the award-winning Lauren Tobia, illustrator of Anna Hibiscus, in this joyful exploration of the new skin of babyhood.

Marley, Cedella. **Get Up, Stand Up**. (**PB** MARLE)

Children are encouraged to resist bullying and stand up for their rights.

Méndez, Yamile Saied. Where Are You From? (PB MENDE)

When a young girl is asked where she's from--where she's really from--she's no longer as she was. She decides to turn to her dear abuelo for some help with this ever-persistent question. But he doesn't quite give her the answer she expects.

Miller, Sharee. **Don't Touch My Hair.** (**PB** MILLE)

Aria loves her soft and bouncy hair, but must go to extremes to avoid people who touch it without permission until, finally, she speaks up. Includes author's note.

Miller, Sharee. **Princess Hair.** (**PB** MILLE)

Little girls pretending to be princesses celebrate the different shapes, textures, and styles of their black hair.

Morales, Yuyi. **Dreamers.** (**PB** MORAL)

An illustrated picture book autobiography in which award-winning author Yuyi Morales tells her own immigration story.

Muhammed, Ibtihaj. The proudest blue: a story of hijab and family. (PB MUHAM)

Faizah relates how she feels on the first day her sister, sixth-grader Asiya, wears a hijab to school.

Nyong'o, Lupita. **Sulwe.** (**PB** NYONG)

When five-year-old Sulwe's classmates make fun of her dark skin, she tries lightening herself to no avail, but her encounter with a shooting star helps her understand there is beauty in every shade.

Penfold, Alexandra. All Are Welcome. (PB PENFO)

llustrations and simple, rhyming text introduce a school where diversity is celebrated and songs, stories, and talents are shared.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. <u>Let it Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters.</u> (**JUV** 323.09 PINKN)

The lives these 10 women led are part of an incredible story about courage in the face of oppression, about the challenges and triumphs of the battle for civil rights, and about speaking out for what you believe in-- even when it feels like no one is listening.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. <u>Sit-in: how four friends stood up by sitting down.</u> (**JUV** 323.119 PINKN)

This picture book is a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the momentous Woolworth's lunch counter sit-in, when four college students staged a peaceful protest that became a defining moment in the struggle for racial equality and the growing civil rights movement.

Reynolds, Peter. **Say Something!** (**PB** REYNO)

From the creator of the New York Times bestseller The Word Collector comes an empowering story about finding your voice, and using it to make the world a better place. The world needs your voice. If you have a brilliant idea... say something! If you see an injustice... say something.

Robertson, David. When We Were Alone. (PB ROBER)

When a young girl helps tend to her grandmother's garden, she begins to notice things that make her curious. Why does her grandmother have long, braided hair and beautifully colored clothing? Why does she speak another language and spend so much time with her family? As she asks her grandmother about these things, she is told about life in a residential school a long time ago, where all of these things were taken away.

Rose, Tiffany. M is for Melanin: a celebration of the black child. (PB ROSE)

Each letter of the alphabet contains affirming, Black-positive messages, from A is for Afro, to F is for Fresh, to W is for Worthy. This book teaches children their ABCs while encouraging them to love the skin that they're in.

Shelton, Paula Young. Child of the Civil Rights Movement. (JUV 323.119 SHELT)

Paula Young Shelton shares her memories of the civil rights movement and her involvement in the historic march from Selma to Montgomery.

Shetterly, Margot Lee. <u>Hidden figures: the true story of four black women and the space</u> race. (JUV 510.925 SHETT)

Explores the previously uncelebrated but pivotal contributions of NASA's African American women mathematicians to America's space program, describing how Jim Crow laws segregated them despite their groundbreaking successes.

Smith, Charles R.,Jr. <u>28 days: moments in Black history that changed the world.</u> (**JUV** 973.049 SMITH)

A picture book look at many of the men and women who revolutionized life for African Americans throughout history.

Sorell, Tracy. We are grateful: otsaliheliga. (PB SOREL)

Otsaliheliga is a Cherokee word that is used to express gratitude. Journey through the year with a Cherokee family and their tribal nation as they express thanks for celebrations big and small. A look at modern Native American life as told by a citizen of the Cherokee Nation.

Tonatiuh, Duncan. **Separate is Never Equal.** (JUV 379.263 TONAT)

Years before the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling Brown v. Board of Education, Sylvia Mendez, an eight-year-old girl of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage, played an instrumental role in Mendez v. Westminster, the landmark desegregation case of 1946 in California.

Weatherford, Carol Boston. <u>Voice of freedom:Fannie Lou Hamer, spirit of the civil rights</u> <u>movement.</u> (JUV BIO HAMER)

Presents a collage-illustrated treasury of poems and spirituals inspired by the life and work of civil rights advocate Fannie Lou Hamer.

Woodson, Jacqueline. The Day You Begin. (PB WOODS)

Other students laugh when Rigoberto, an immigrant from Venezuela, introduces himself but later, he meets Angelina and discovers that he is not the only one who feels like an outsider.